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This conference paper maintains that to more effectively motivate disadvantaged students certain basic changes within the school system must be made. Educational intervention should not be limited to preschool education. The use of indigenous nonprofessionals in the schools may benefit the older disadvantaged student by providing him with a role model and a sympathetic adult from his own social class. Work-study programs can also be effective with these students. Amother important strategy is specialized training for teachers and administrators in disadvantaged schools. School personnel should learn to recognize and respect the positive, adaptive qualities of the poor, and to utilize these qualities in the planning and execution of lessons. In the classroom teachers might use readers which warmly portray Negro children in urban settings. It is especially important that the classroom not be dominated by a "prissy" middle-class atmosphere. Comments from a discussion period are presented. (NH)

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Working Paper
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STRATEGIES FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE DISADVANTAGED

by

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Presented at the
Conference on Curriculum Innovation for the Culturally Disadvantaged
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Center for Instructional Research and Curriculum Evaluation (CIRCE)
College of Education
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DR. JOHN A. EASLEY, JR: It is my pleasure and privilege to welcome all of you to the first session of the Conference on Curriculum Innovation for the Culturally Disadvantaged. As many of you know from the announcement you received as you came into the room, this conference is in session for approximately two and a half days. We have with us many specialists on education of disadvantaged persons as well as specialists in curriculum innovation. In addition to the sessions for these specialists, there are a number of sessions, including this one, that are open to the public. You are certainly welcome to attend all of them. We certainly welcome all of you.

I am very pleased to introduce as our first speaker in this conference, Professor Frank Riessman. Professor Riessman received his Ph.D. from Columbia University, and he is Associate Professor of Psychology at Bard College. He is also Visiting Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at Columbia University, and at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. Professor Riessman has taught at Rutgers, Vassar, and the City College of New York. His work has been primarily concerned with social class and sub-culture differences, with special reference to educational problems. He is the author of The Culturally Deprived Child, a book which has opened the eyes of many of us to the narrow preconceptions that we had about the problems of such children. I have just learned that he is also author of a new book entitled Mental Health of the Poor, and I certainly look forward to reading it. We are fortunate to have a man with Professor Riessman's background and his well-deserved recognition speak to us today. His subject is "Strategies for the Education of the Disadvantaged". Professor Riessman.

DR. FRANK RIESSMAN: It is a pleasure to be here, and to try to place in some context the significance of curriculum innovation as a major strategy in the education of the disadvantaged child.

I am not an expert, and there have been many better informed experts on low-income youngsters for many years. Looking back over the past five years, I think it is significant that the disadvantaged and the poor have become such important subjects for discussion. As we indicated at lunch, there have been many conferences and a great deal of interest, support--I suppose I have lectured in about 100 cities as a non-expert--and this will give you some idea of the widespread interest in this subject.

Now Al Davis was interested in this long before I was, of course, and long before most of us here were--some twenty-five or thirty years ago. Fifteen years ago Mike Miller and I attempted to publish a book on the poor ten times over, but we were consistently refused by the best publishers in the land.

This is an interesting question in the field of sociology, when taken in the context of a discussion strategy. It seems to me that the overall strategy that we have to keep in mind, and I admit it is a long way from the specifics of our conference, is that the great power propelling the great interest in the disadvantaged, comes from two sides. It seems to me that it is a magnificent overall strategy. On the one side is the push from the Civil Rights movement. This, in a sense, says, and it has been beautifully incorporated by Commissioner Keppel, that you can no longer say that these children are not educable. You control them in your environment and you have to educate them in the school. Don't blame their environment. We control a part of it. Let's do something about it. The integration movement, among other things, has put forth this position.

On the other side there is the tremendous support of the Federal Government who has responded to this demand by the Civil Rights movement by rewarding people working with the disadvantaged. In other words, as an overall context, I would say you have a combination of punishment and reward functioning together. You have the Civil Rights movement demanding that education be changed, and you have the Federal Government paying for it. You have, in a sense, the pressures of both the negative and the positive. I suggest that this is a powerful context for change, and I would predict enormous changes in the education system.

It is most striking that the new bill is particularly directed toward the poor. However, it is concerned with the improvement of education for all. I think it is worth noting that the integration movement's demand for change in the school system has not led simply to the improvement of education for the disadvantaged, but is leading toward a basically improved educational system. I think a very beautiful, simple example of this, which I would like to cite, is the example of the Detroit Readers, the Follett Readers, which many of you know about. The Readers were demanded because the standard Readers were inadequate for the development of reading of urban minority children lacking such images.

The striking thing about the development of these Readers, however, is not simply the improvement of the reading of the disadvantaged Negro child, but the fantastic improvement as well of the middle-class white child. So what really is in evidence here is a demand for a change in the educational system propelled and powered by the disadvantaged or, in this case, by a particular group of the disadvantaged--the Negro group--which has led to improvements in Readers as such. I really believe that this was the model. I haven't got time to document it at length, but I could give you at least half a dozen other examples. I think there are many more.

Now comes the question of the specific strategies which are currently on the horizon. I would like to talk about a number of these strategies at length but I know we have a time problem, and since our concern is largely with curriculum, I will leave the significance of curriculum innovation as a strategy until last and spend more time on it.

It seems to me today though, that the most popular strategy, which I want to mention to you as a major strategy for the education of the disadvantaged, is the emphasis on the pre-school, and I would like to suggest that we begin to look at this more critically. I am not, of course, going to suggest that the education of the pre-school child is not important, but I want to have you think about it a little. Is this a major strategy for the education of the disadvantaged? There are a few questions which I would like to raise about this.

The first and most fundamental question is this: if the fundamental changes for the education of the disadvantaged are to come from a pervasive change in the school system, which I believe to be the case, is the pre-school emphasis the most useful tool for producing major changes in the school system per se? I think not. I don't want to deceive you, but I won't spend a lot of time on it. I simply ask you to look at the question carefully. Put in its extreme form, almost satirically, it is possible to argue that we can, by pre-school education, attempt to prepare the disadvantaged child to function adequately in an unchanged limited school system. I know this is an extreme position, and I know this is not what people are really calling for. But I would have us think about the significance of an emphasis on the pre-school as a major strategy. It seems to point away from the concern for basic changes within the school system itself.

Moreover, the changes that are produced in the education of the pre-school child and the effects of these changes, are a good fourteen years away. I do not subscribe to the recent widespread position that there is no way of getting to adolescents--older children who have had negative experiences in the school system--and winning them to learning and so on. I think there is beginning to be a good deal of evidence to the contrary, but we haven't begun to work with this problem. And to some extent there is an effort to turn away from this major concern and to move back to the pre-school child.

I believe that significant changes in American life are going to be taking place in the next ten years. I can't quite wait for these four-year-olds. I want the people who are in school now. I want the adolescents. I want the adults to be very much involved in these changes, as they are increasingly becoming involved. I cannot accept the idea easily that the stress should be on these pre-school programs.

One last question to have us think about in relation to the pre-school program: If, as some of the preliminary evidence seems to indicate, certain changes can be produced in the pre-school child, in terms of cognitive functioning, and so on, for these changes to remain and become fully developed and internalized in the child, I think it is fairly obvious that there is going to be a great deal of reinforcement required in the school system itself, and in other areas which I will come to in a minute. Without this reinforcement, I think the pre-school emphasis will remain largely mythical and will quickly fall away. This is an overstatement, of course. I want you to appraise this strategy at every point, to give a great deal of attention to how these changes which are produced in the Dirks program, by Strodtbeck and by others, are to remain for a long period of time to become fully a part of the individual without powerful reinforcement in the school and in other areas. The other areas I think relate to jobs, which I will come to in a minute. I don't think this group is most interested in the pre-school question, so I have been very brief on this point; however, I think you should be aware that it is one of the major competing strategies confronting you today. The second major strategy, which I like to believe is becoming more important, but perhaps I am exaggerating, is the emphasis on the non-professional revolution in education. By this I mean the increasing emphasis on the use of the poor themselves as non-professionals in the school system and in other systems. The entire health, education, and welfare fields, we believe, will be able to produce millions of jobs for the poor themselves. The educational system was the area that led in the use of non-professionals, largely through the Ford Foundation, and they have envinced much interest in the use of aid, assistance from the poor themselves in the classroom, and as parent education coordinators in the community. In the classroom they assist teachers in attendance taking, in homework helping, tutoring, and in running machines. They can also assist in programmed learning and in many other areas.

I think that this trend has powerful implications because of the fact that it can do at least two things. One, it can provide models to the low income child of people from his own background who have jobs in the school system, and the jobs seem possible to do within their range of capability.

Two, it can produce a connection, an intermediary, a bridge between the disadvantaged child and the professional--the teacher, the school system, professional agency. It is of utmost importance that this bridge be developed. This person can translate each to the other as the parent education coordinator does.

n example I observed in Syracuse, which seems to be leading the country in a umber of areas, was the use of non-professionals in the school system, functioning in one case conducting the quiet room, the room where children were sent who could not function in the classroom, who were misbehaving, etc. I talked to some of these non-professionals and I was struck by a couple of things immediately. One--they didn't know anything about the various methods of working with disturbed youngsters or troubled youngsters or behavior problems or anything like that. Two--they were remarkably effective in working with these kids. Everyone said so--not only themselves--the administrators, the teachers, the parents, and the children. It was most striking. Among the various reasons for this I think was the fact that these non-professionals spoke the language of the youngsters involved. They knew them outside of the school and saw them in the neighborhood and with their parents. They understood them, and they were models for them. They represented people whom the youngsters could think of becoming like, and possibly want to be like.

Another example in the same area was the use of homework helpers at Mobilization For Youth, where we discovered that the person from a poor background was giving help. In this instance it was a high school youngster with a seventy-five average or better, who was helping elementary school youngsters who were doing poorly in school. We discovered that, not only did these youngsters who were doing poorly improve considerably from tutoring help two hours a week in the afternoon, but the homework helpers themselves began to think of a career in education. They began to consider becoming teachers, going on to college and so on. These were thoughts that they had not had before.

One other example, which I think has particular force because it indicates how you can provide jobs first and educate later, was the work done by Howard University with a group of ten juvenile delinquents. These youngsters had committed a number of offenses which had been recorded. They did not take the cream of the crop which many programs do. At random, they took ten youngsters which included seven boys and three girls, eighteen to twenty-one years of age. They were dropouts from school with delinquent records, very low literacy, and so on. They developed a training program oriented toward producing non-professional jobs for them. The three jobs they were being prepared for were child care aide, research aide, and recreation aide. The initial tasks they were given in the training operation were very, very simple tasks. For example, they interviewed each other with a tape recorder which they loved doing. This was part of a research task. Incidentally, they got a lot of interview material from within their own group which is not readily available to others. Consequently they had some rather interesting interview data in this context.

And what's significant about this program is that they were slowly prepared and then put on jobs half a day, per day. The other half a day they discussed the jobs. They discussed what they needed to know to perform these jobs, and the learning was built-in as they needed it. A side note of great interest was the fact that the assignment to the three different jobs was discussed by the group, a very group oriented approach, and the youngsters assigned two male youngsters to the pre-school program. They did not assign the girls. The pre-school people in the area were very disturbed by this. They wanted the girls, because they thought the girls would be much better, and they were rather afraid of these rather tough youngsters and so on. There was a lot of back and forth discussion about this. The leader of the program asked the youngsters why they had decided they wanted to do it. The group as a whole agreed that it seemed to them that

the girls were not so interested in the job when they had practiced doing it part of the day and that the boys seemed very eager to do it. Well, that seemed one reason. When they asked the boys themselves, they said, "Well, look, I'll tell you the truth, I don't want to go out there in the recreation yard, because if I do I am going to see some of my old friends from around the block, and they may do some things that are wrong and I don't exactly know how to handle them. I don't want to drop the dime." That's Washington lingo for "call the cops". "And the working with the pre-school youngsters doesn't seem to be as troubling," they said. "We'd rather do that." So the leaders of the program went back to the pre-school professionals and asked them how they felt about this. They still were very resistant. They said they would rather give them a trial for two weeks. They said, "No, one week." "Okay." You know how you fight professionals. I can only tell you that the pre-school people have not let them go since then. They did such a fantastic job on it that on the half day when they were back getting the special training, the pre-school called them up for particular assistance. They never had individuals in the situation before who could handle the boys as well as they did, and in general could function with the kind of know-how that these youngsters seem to have on the job.

Now, the point about all this is not the Howard experiment itself as such, which, by the way, is a revolutionary experiment in many ways, but the point I am suggesting as a strategy, or that Arthur Pearl suggested as a strategy, is that here you have the opportunity of providing jobs first and building in the education as needed. Now, of course, you can't put all the education in the half day that they are off the job. That's perfectly obvious. You can put in much more than you think particularly through programmed learning. Donald Cook has pointed out that it takes far less time to learn many of the things we think takes years and years to learn, provided there is motivation, and that is the thing that is produced in this situation. Not only motivation in terms of the general meaning of motivation, but specific motivation. They have to learn, for example, to fill out forms. They have to learn how to write. They have to learn how to record the research evidence they are gathering. They really couldn't function any further without getting these tools. And this was a remarkable useful way of bringing them into the system. But much more, of course, is required. Once they come into the system this far, they have to be able to supplement this kind of development by getting further education in the formal sense. For this to be meaningful, it is going to be necessary for the educational institutions to give credit for this on-the-job type of experience. So what we are now calling for in Washington is the reversal of what many of the colleges have done for many years, doing it the opposite way.

For example, I taught at Bard College and we had the youngsters go out for two months a year and do field work for which we gave them course credit. Antioch does this for six months a year. Why can't we do this with the poor by employing them first, then providing these non-professional jobs, building in some skills, sending them back to school part-time and full-time, and using the on-the-job experience that they have obtained as course credit? This would seem to me to be a meaningful way of bringing in youngsters of all ages - adults included--into the system. It emphasizes providing jobs first and education afterward, rather than education for jobs which are eighteen years away, and which are very hard to envision, and for which there is much competition.

Now, what we are arguing here is that in the professional fields there is an enormous manpower shortage, expecially education, but also in social work,

psychiatry, health, and all the welfare agencies. This tremendous manpower shortage can be made up by the use of sub-professionals under the guidance and leadership of professionals. I don't have time to document this in detail. If, in the question period you want to go into this, Arthur Pearl and I have written a good deal about it, and have attempted to develop the strategy in much more detail. All I am trying to suggest to you here is that there may be approaches whereby we can employ large numbers of the poor immediately. They would be trained, in part, on the job, educated concomitantly, and afterward would provide models to other members of the poor who are being served. They would see these non-professionals functioning in the school system, providing meaningful models and supplying the communication which is so badly needed between the poor and the professionals. These people would become the middle-man in this operation.

There are obviously problems and difficulties here. I will just mention one. There is a great need to define the operation in order to eliminate competition between the non-professionals and professionals. We have been working a good deal on this in cooperation with the Albert Einstein Medical College. We have a neighborhood service center store-front where we train and use aides, working as mental health aides, in the community. One of the problems we are concerned about is the careful definition of roles so that there is no invidious comparison.

The third area of strategy which I generally talk about comes under the question of teacher training, but I am combining it today with the whole question of curriculum. I am sure that you are aware of the recent National Defense Education Act which provides teacher training institutes for the development of instruction of disadvantaged youngsters. They will begin in the summer of 1965, and some will be full year courses the following year. I must confess, at the moment, I wouldn't know what to teach in a full year course of that type. I couldn't fill it up. But we have ways of doing that you know, one of our professional skills. In any case, these programs I think are very significant. They have been sadly lacking and lagging, as a major strategy, but I think that they are on the scene now and we want to look at them in terms of the issues involved and so on.

The first issue that seems to me paramount for a lot of attention is the involvement of administrators, other school personnel, guidance people, psychologists, and so on, but particularly administrators, in the development of these programs. They should not simply be for teachers. Here I think the model created by Sam Sheperd in St. Louis is most relevant for approaches to teachers. In a sense what Sheperd did is terribly simple, and I think we can go far beyond it, but he was extremely effective. His effectiveness is based on the fact that he was able to do two striking things. One, he brought youngsters in the so-called slum schools, or low income neighborhood schools, up to grade level very, very quickly. They were not pre-school youngsters or elementary school youngsters alone, but they were all the way through junior high school which is the first very startling result. Incidentally, I think that it is far easier than we have come to imagine it to be. We haven't begun to put energy into doing this. But Sheperd did this, I'll tell you the way in just a minute, but he did this and he also was able to reduce teacher dropout in the system to nil. He now, not only does not have teachers dropping out of the system, but he has a waiting list of teachers to come and teach in this disadvantaged area. And he did it with two very simple strategies which seem to me key administrative strategies.

First, he met with the teachers. He told them two things. He said, "We can teach these youngsters. We are not going to talk about their I.Q.'s or their

backgrounds and why they can't learn. We are going to emphasize teaching them. Secondly, and most important, you are going to tell me how to do it because you really know collectively. This doesn't mean that I am not going to tell you anything, but we are going to get you together in groups to talk together about how we can educate these youngsters. Not what we do--I know what we do, and that's awful. What I am talking about is what we know that we haven't been able to do. Teachers have an enormous amount of this knowledge that they, for a variety of reasons, have not been able to put into practice."

Not that any one teacher has it all by any means, but collectively, as a group, I've never yet conducted a teacher workshop with a group of teachers where I didn't learn a great deal. I have also discovered that every good idea that I thought I had in the collective, existed in some form or other.

And what Sheperd in a sense said is that we are going to ask you to participate, decide, and play a role in this system. We are going to listen to what you have to say in the workshop. We will tell you some of the things we are learning around the country about what other people are doing and see if you can incorporate them to fit your particular needs.

Some of the things we might suggest, like role playing, you might not want to do. Other things, like hip language, you might want to do and so on, so we'll tell you all the different kinds of curriculum modifications that are going on, and other kinds of teacher methods which are being developed. See what you think about it, compare notes and try them out, first in your little group, and then in the classroom situation. This, by the way, is a very simple kind of model. I call it the site model of training, which I think is a very crucial one, which means doing the training right on the job in the area. The key concept is the involvement of the teachers, really letting them into the system.

The second thing that Sheperd did, I will spend less time on, but I am sure most of you know about it, and that is the involvement of the parents in this operation. He stimulated them, he challenged them, he pointed out clearly that he was going to cooperate with them, he was going to listen to them, and back up their demands. In return he asked for their backing in checking on the homework of the youngsters, taking exception to the youngster when he said that the teacher was no good, and didn't care about him, and so on.

He did a number of other things but I think that this simple model is very crucial and that the implications for the school system are enormous. Teachers simply have not been let into the operation of the school system and, consequently, their actual performance has been quite limited.

I hope you give me a little digressive moment in a matter of interest to me. Since I think the teachers are the heart of the matter, I just want to note an experience of mine in retrospect. When The Culturally Deprived Child first came out a number of superintendents of schools and a number of other well-informed leaders in the community were very disturbed about the book, aside from the bad title and all that. They were very disturbed by the fact that this book seemed to be anti-teacher, and Harpers had asked some of them to endorse the book. This is common practice in promoting a book. They refused to do it, despite the fact they had learned a lot from it. They could not endorse it because they felt it was anti-teacher. They predicted the teachers would be furious at the book.

But it is very interesting that it has not been the case at all. A very striking observation, and this is not a private opinion of mine, is that lots of evidence that I could give you for it has been gathered. The teachers have not responded to this even though the book is critical of teachers. I think that's very interesting. I think it tells us a great deal.

I had a little luncheon conversation with a gentleman I met here today during which he raised the question about teachers who do not wish to become involved and so on. My dictum on this is that whenever you ask somebody to be involved in something, my assumption, as an action working hypothesis, is that they would want to be involved. I think people like to participate in doing something that has some value and importance. And so if they refuse me, I don't look at them askance. I don't look at them and say, "You don't want to be involved, what's wrong with you--you've given up and so forth." I examine the way I have asked them and what I've asked them to do. And, in this case, I think you can see that the manner in which we have asked parents to become involved has prevented them from becoming involved, and the way we have frequently asked teachers to become involved has prevented them from becoming involved. It is something to do with the way you ask them and whether you really are willing to let them in to play a role in the system. And one last little note on this is to observe you. Since I have spoken in a great many cities, I have observed in my early days of doing this that a rather fascinating thing occurs. I get a tremendously different reception depending upon whether the speech is given before 3:00 o'clock, or after 3:00 o'clock.

If it is before 3:00 o'clock, no matter how bad it is, there is a great deal of interest, and after 3:00 o'clock, no matter how good it is, there is a great deal of resistance. I think this tells you a lot about the involvement of teachers, and about some of the simplest principles--and there is something negative about that--about teachers. It has something to do with administration. It doesn't mean that teachers will not work after 3:00 o'clock. Of course they will. Many times, as you well know. But the significant thing is, if we are going to have this kind of workshop or conference on the disadvantaged, let's have it on school time initially. A very simple kind of administrative principle, of which I was unaware. A number of administrators explained to me that the hour of the day at which a talk is given is important.

So I think the teachers are a core feature in the system, the teacher workshop, the on-going site based teacher workshop is crucial, and I think, in this connection, there are a number of principles which should be considered in these workshops, but I am going to combine them, with the discussion of curriculum which is more relevant to this conference. Some of the same principles apply to anyone who is concerned about the development of curriculum materials for the disadvantaged. It applies also for the teachers and their development and their understanding of the disadvantaged.

As a matter of fact, to be completely honest about it, I think these principles apply to anyone who works with the poor, whether a social worker or psychologist, or whatever.

It has occurred to me as I have seen various developers of curriculum in different parts of the country, that people have been brought into these areas to devise programming for the disadvantaged who have no understanding of the disadvantaged. They have a great deal of expertise about curriculum technology or subject matter,

such as physics, social science, history, etc., but I think that the curriculum and teacher training can be developed without a deep understanding of the disadvantaged themselves.

I am going to try to point out that this, to some extent, is successful on occasion, although it is severely limited because there is no underpinning. There is no basic understanding, no depth, and no theory for why this particular kind of curriculum material should be developed, nor is there any basic approach to the development of curriculum material.

As a matter of fact, I heartily believe that there is a tremendous amount of such curriculum material available that does not require only innovation and new materials, but there is available a great deal of material which hardly anybody uses, interestingly enough. Some of it even appears in the Sunday Times. I'll give you an example a little later on. But first, the question of how to view the disadvantaged as a basic approach for teachers and curriculum developers, and how to find out about the disadvantaged. In terms of viewing the disadvantaged, there are, it seems to me, three approaches. And I think two of them are very bad. I want to be very clear about it.

First is the environmentalist's view. It emphasizes the negative environment of the poor--the insecurity, the lack of books, the lack of leisure, the cramped neighborhood, the lack of space, and so forth and so on. You can go on for about fifteen minutes on these areas.

I suspect that most people know about the environment of the poor, and if they don't, it should only take about half a day to inform them, or a one-hour presentation. I don't think it takes a great deal of emphasis, and a great deal of detailing of it, because if you emphasize the environment, you wind up with a reinforcement of the notion of the poor, poor, poor. You end up with the notion that we have to help these people in other ways. We become patronizing and condescending toward them, and I think this is a very inadequate action approach. For me to say this to most of you today is patronizing on my part, and I apologize for it. But I think it should be recognized that the environmentalists' emphasis is still very prevalent in looking at the poor. Many courses and programs on the training of teachers of the disadvantaged, if you look at the curriculum they are developing, emphasize this environment. They send people out to look at this environment, and they come back with all the stereotypes reinforced that they have had before.

A second view, which is becoming much more popular, is the cultural view of a particular kind, and it emphasizes, in its key concept, the culture of poverty. The culture of poverty is a remarkable selection of all the negative traits which can be found to characterize low income cultures. It has packaged them very neatly. It talks about the fatalism, the pessimism, the ennui, the alienation, the apathy, the belief in luck, fate and the like. In an otherwise superb book, Mike Harrington, I think, makes this error, supporting the notion that one of the great reasons why the poor are poor is because they have this negative culture of poverty. The idea, of course, comes from Oscar Lewis originally, but it is a widespread notion today.

People, moving from the environmentalist doctrine, have gone on to a cultural doctrine, but have acquired a negative cultural doctrine. The culture of poverty and the action implications of it are the self-same action implications that

follow from the environmentalist viewpoint. Here are the poor, poor, poor again. We have to help them from the outside. We have to bring things to them. This is a negative culture. I think this is a very, very poor action design. It is difficult to motivate people or to work with people, if one has this kind of orientation.

A third orientation, which I have talked about a good deal before, is an emphasis on the positive culture, positive traits, and positive behavior that exists in low income groups, which have evolved as these groups have attempted to cope with a difficult environment.

A few examples will explain what I mean. People used to tell me that I didn't give examples, so I made a huge, huge list of examples. You can look at the neighborhood of the poor and say it lacks recreational facilities, which is true. Now, what do the youngsters do in this recreationless environment? Do they capitulate and fall apart, or do they also develop their own recreation forms? We were interested in this problem so we sent a group of observers from Mobilization for Youth to 92nd Street in New York. They found youngsters amusing themselves with fifteen different games of their own making, composed of four elements: chalk, a ball, a wall, and themselves. I think this is a very striking illustration. There are many others. If you go through the neighborhoods of the poor you will see the way the kids sing together, using objects on the street to play their music. You will see the way they use baskets to hang on fire escapes to throw balls through, and so on. You could really spend many, many days observing. It would be a useful exercise in teacher training programs, by the way, to have people go and see how the people of the poor find recreation.

However, don't let them go with stereotyped ideas. Have them look carefully at what people do to provide recreation and to develop in this limited negative environment and see how they attempt to cope with it. I am not suggesting that all the coping methods are valuable, or will remain in the long history of mankind, or anything of that sort. Some, I think, will contribute, but this is not the purpose of my talk this morning. Some will contribute, I think, to total universal culture.

I think reactions, for example, to discrimination and to slavery historically--some of the things the Black Muslims talked about--had some very interesting insights in it, particularly what happens to you if you don't enslave anyone else. I think there are some very significant things which develop in you because of this. If you don't manipulate, control, or dominate anyone, you have some possibility of an understanding and developing an ethic which may not be available to other people as easily. I think it's worth thinking about, but I am really off my point in suggesting this.

John Killins, in a brilliant article in the Sunday Times about six months ago, discussed this much more eloquently than I.

The point is that we should begin to look at this environment in terms of what people are doing in it and cope with it in terms of recreation, struggle, anger, or demanding a change in the educational system. The integration movement is another illustration of this, and there are countless illustrations of what people are doing in this environment. The reason I emphasize this so strongly is

because it will allow for the honest development of what most people agree is fundamental for the educator, which is respect for the person he is educating. When I speak to various groups I emphasize the significance of respecting the disadvantaged, and they agree that it is extremely important to respect these people, or we will never educate them. It is fundamental to it.

I like to surprise them by asking, if they respect the disadvantaged. And they would say, "Well, what do you mean, of course--you know--well, of course, they're Americans, good people basically, Christians." I point out to them that some aren't Christian. But this is the way the discussions go. They really didn't know what to respect. There was no basis for any genuine respect, and consequently the notion of respect was just another demagogic idea.

I think this is still prevalent in the country. I don't think this has changed. So what I am suggesting is an approach to developing this kind of respect, and exercises which you assign in your workshops that will actually achieve respect.

I ran an exercise recently in a rather unique context. McGraw-Hill has recently made three movies on the disadvantaged called The Child, The School and The Community. They had about six or seven consultants. I worked on it and some others may be in this audience. The people who were making the film, talked about how to present such films, etc. We talked about--just what I am talking to you about--the need to focus on these positives. And they said, "Well, sure, we'll do that, we'll try to find them, what do you mean by them - oh, yes." It was all rather vague.

But you see, they had to go out and shoot the film. They had an exercise to do. And they had me behind them coming back to see those films, see if they did it, and to see if they found anything in the neighborhood. I wanted to see if they knew how to look. And sure enough, you'll find when they see these films, although they are not great films, they are a step forward. They found many things going on in the neighborhood which surprised them, and they had only begun to scratch the surface in this exercise. They found, for example, children on the street doing a little dance, quite an interesting little dance. They were astonished. When they talked to these youngsters in their own terms, they were remarkably more verbal than it was believed they could be. When they did a little role playing about the police--they used the real police, you know when they shot the film--you have to recognize this is role play, because that's what they are doing. The whole thing is role play. The police asked them, "Why are you on this corner? What are you doing?" The children just loved telling off the "fuzz" as they said. You'll see that this film gives you the dimensions of their life not usually available on film. And again I want to emphasize, they are very, very minimal. But the exercise is the fact that the film-maker had to find some things like this and go and take a look rather than assume that he knew. This takes time and you have to know how to look. We'll get to this in just a minute.

So the point I am trying to make is that, in order to develop these materials you have to have a genuine respect for these people based upon a knowledge of the culture and style, and the positives in it. You have to recognize the efforts that these people have made to deal with the limited environment and not simply focus on the environment.

Now the crucial question is how to find out about this culture and style. And again, I guess one of my basic problems with society is--just speaking personally--that I find people remarkably conventional and prosaic in going about these things.

For example, the two most characteristic things that the workshops do is one, have people read some of the sociological materials and treatises on low income groups, most of which are quite inadequate, quite dated and lacking in life. Some are quite good, Herb Ganza's Urban Villages, for example, is a beautiful illustration and a very valuable one. Allison Davis's work is good, as well as others. These are some of the exceptions, but for the most part we don't have a lot of good, rich, exciting, penetrating sociological materials.

Second, workshop people go around to the neighborhood visiting the homes, on tours, and so on, as though this is going to correct their preconceptions and their stereotypes and misunderstandings. I think both of these examples are quite limited and I would suggest, by contrast, a very different kind of approach which I will outline very briefly.

The key thing, which should be done in the workshops and by anybody developing these materials, is to read and look at and view the artistic materials about the poor; to view movies such as Nothing But a Man, The Cool World, and The Puerto Rican, The Bridge; to read novels like The Street, and Nelson Ahlgren's novels. The materials of the English, for example, such as Saturday Night and Sunday Morning, The Sporting Life, and so on, will give good contrast.

What I am suggesting is a look at the art, the music, the dance forms, the literature, and children's work. For example, Negro Heritage is a magazine which can be easily used in the schools on Negro history. These materials would provide the beginnings of a much deeper insight and understanding of what these youngsters are like. I am not suggesting any one novel will do it. Certainly not! What I would hope would occur--this is a second feature of the programming I am going for--is that there would be lots of controversy and argument and interest about this. How is one low income culture different from another? Where are the strengths in this culture? What does this behavior mean? Are the Puerto Ricans, who keep their children off the streets, being overprotective? Is this an accurate notion? Is it just a notion that Negro low income youngsters want males in the schools because they have not had consistent masculine figures in the home? Or is this a very questionable idea? I would question this very deeply. I would discuss it very carefully, very provocatively.

I've seen these low income youngsters of fifteen and sixteen on the street in groups and so-called gangs, and it seems to me they are anything but demasculinized. They seem to be very tough, strong, and concerned with masculine values, and so on. Walter Miller used to tell me that they were just compensating. I thought it was an interesting idea, but I wanted to probe a little deeper. I used to look at children who were one to four years old, and I found these same Negro youngsters, at those ages, expressing a great deal of strength and masculinity. It didn't seem to me possible that this was due to compensation. Compensation doesn't develop as a mechanism at one, you see. So it wasn't compensation.

The question is, "What is it?" I'm going to leave this thought with you. I'm not going to tell you what I think it is, but I think it is something which should be discussed rather than believing in the highly cliche-ridden idea that these

youngsters want male teachers because they have been brought up in a demasculinized home. I think they want male teachers because they have been brought up in very strong homes, and the school has a very different kind of culture, a rather prissy culture which they don't like, but not because they have been demasculinized. But that's another question. Whether you agree with me or not is beside the point. The point is that the workshops and curriculum development laboratories should start to really discuss provocatively and controversially the question of the cultures and behaviors of the poor, making comparisons with different groups, getting on the inside. What is it like to be a member of this culture? You can get some idea from the literary material and some from role play - not completely from anything, of course. But you can begin by role playing. You can reverse the role by playing a member of the culture confronting a teacher, for example. You begin to get some understanding of what the style, the way of thinking, the way of learning, the way of operating and working is in this kind of population. If you get this kind of interest, I think this basic interest will lead to the development of respect, rather than by trying to explain the culture, and then building curriculum materials from it. I think it will be much more interesting to get very provocative about it. Take an example from a different area, for a moment. Let's take a look at some curricula material.

I saw the Bank Street Readers yesterday. I'm sure you have all heard about them. They are the new readers that are being developed for urban children. You know what they mean, the new euphemism--urban children in the inner city, and so forth and so on, and, sure enough, these pictures and stories have Negro children in them. That's great. But let me tell you my reaction for what it is worth.

I am telling you, not as a fact, or even as an educated opinion. I speak emotionally because I think you ought to argue about it. I thought the readers were the most antiseptic books I have ever looked at in my life. They seem to me to be very antiseptic, cold, and sterile. They didn't click with me. They just were not written and developed by people who knew something about these cultures. They were trying to do the right thing, and I mention this simply to provoke discussion, not to criticize the readers. I only looked at them for fifteen minutes. I may be very wrong, but all the figures looked very middle class to me--middle-class Negro--but middle-class

It is of some interest that here is a program which spent a long time, a lot of research, and lot of effort doing this. There is something wrong. There is something missing in this. Maybe it is the political context in which they are working. I'm sure they are trying to be fair, and to do the right thing. You know the Follett Readers had some of the same difficulties. But, frankly, I find them warmer, funnier, zippier, and I think this is a very necessary element. I am not trying to praise the Follett Readers. I have heard all the things that are wrong with them. There is a boringly long list of what's wrong with them. But the thing that I think is significant for us to face is the realization that this whole question is being dealt with in this lifeless manner. One thing that I feel I have learned about the culture of the poor is that they find school terribly dull, terribly boring, terribly lacking in any excitement, and this reflects part of our own problems. I want these workshops and these curriculum developers to get some argument, some controversy into the picture. I think this is extremely useful. I think it would be well, by the way, if the controversy wasn't on the question of whether The Culturally Deprived is a good title or not. There isn't any, because I don't like the title either.

But it is interesting. I say it to you because it reflects to me the displacement of real controversy onto foolish questions, rather than discussing the interesting issues. What this culture is like? Is there a culture? Are there some differences? How does it overlap? And so on. These are the questions which I think have to be considered.

Now we come to the more specific questions of curriculum strategy itself. A major deduction from what I have been saying here seems to be that the materials we develop should be constructed so that they are not acting upon these youngsters, but drawing from them. I know this is an old educational bromide, and progressive educators said it long before I was born--or just about the time that I was born--but it seems to me to have a lot of meaning in the present context.

Let me give you an example to make it more specific. Not long ago I was called upon to evaluate what is probably the best pre-school program in the United States. I observed in this excellent program, positively oriented program, the following things which are very striking in terms of the concept of "Acting Upon". It was a rainy day and I went to four of the classes and I observed each teacher. I was accompanied by several people on the tour. I said to the first one, "There seem to be more girls in this program. Do you have more girls in this program?" They said, "No, no, an equal number." In the second class, again I observed that there seemed to be more girls in this class. There were about seven girls and three boys present out of a class of fifteen. The rest were absent. And I again said that there seemed to be a larger number of girls, and they looked at the class, and they said, "No, it's about equal."

This happened four times in a row. It seems to me to show what people see and what they know. They know there are an equal number, but that's not what's there, and I was looking at what was there. So finally, I said, "Let's count them." They said, "Oh, yes, you are quite right, there seems to be more girls here today than boys. The boys seem to be absent." I said, "Are the boys sugar plums--they stay home when it rains?" They answered, "We don't know what it is this time. Let's think about it."

So I watched the classes in session and there were two teachers working with fifteen youngsters which is becoming the model number, I think--observe ratio. Two professionals, not even one non-professional which I would much have preferred, were there. The Montessori system, where you have thirty-five kids with one teacher seems to work more effectively. But these were two and fifteen, which is, as I say, becoming the model, and they really were all over the kids. When I say "acting upon" - the child couldn't move there without a teacher moving in on him. The teachers were extremely good. They had learned a lot of the lessons I had tried to teach for a couple of years. They were role playing the stories, they were acting out, they were making the sounds of the cat in the story, and you know, it was just as exciting--all daylight for me, but not for some of the youngsters. I saw one of the few boys present do a little cartwheel and a little tumble. The second teacher went over to him, patted him on the back, set him straight and told him to listen to the story. Later the boy got up and did another cartwheel.

Later on another one of the boys, while the story was being read, would go "Di-do-di-do-di-do-di-do" and the teacher went over to him and calmed him and calmed his foot and got him oriented toward the stories. You see what I mean by acting upon--not drawing from.

So the teachers - this program was on in the morning and in the afternoon - discussed the preparation. I said to the teachers, "Some interesting things happened out there this morning." We talked about it. They saw it differently. And I said, "That was an interesting tumble that boy did." They said, "What tumble." I said, "You know, the time you stopped the boy." "Oh, he wasn't listening to the story, oh, yes. That's common." I said, "That was a very interesting tumble, the boy liked to tumble. Ever think about using any tumblings in any of your tumbling exercises?"--oh, no. "Well, when they have outdoor activities they do a lot of things like that. On rainy days they didn't do that. And you don't notice it--there is nothing you can use from it--about tumbling."

They talked about the child who was making this little song up while the lesson was going on. I said, "That was an interesting song the youngster was making up then." She said, "What song? What child was making it up?" So I told her which child it was and which song it was. I said, "Did you remember the tune, did you notice it?' "No, never thought about it." So I did the tune again for her and I said, "Is this one of the things you have in your music lesson when you have it?" "No, no." "Think you might want to put it into the music lesson?" Well, I don't see any reason why not. We have a very carefully programmed music program, very well developed music exercises, we might be able to get it in."

But the point is, these teachers had no concept of how to use anything that the kids were doing that came out of their life that could be used and programmed into the learning. They didn't understand the simple lesson which Sylvia Ashton Warner so beautifully describes in The Teacher and The Spinster in terms of using the life and materials, the style of the youngsters involved and programming them into the material.

However, my point about the children in the classroom and many others I have seen, is that the boys were very, very bored. The reason there wasn't an equal number present in most of these classes was that the boys didn't like the classes. The classes were much more tuned to the interests and style and moods of a little girl, much less so for the little boy.

This is just one illustration of the issue confronting us in developing materials. Are we going to develop material based upon the content of the culture and the style of the culture? By the style, I am sure you know that I mean the physical, visual, concrete oriented quality of the low income group. I think this is an essential element to use in the development of curriculum materials. We must look at this style and look at this culture, get a lot of inside feeling about it; read the Negro Heritage magazine, which could be used as curriculum material at certain levels, and it could be used as guidance for teachers only.

Or take the magazine Scope which, again, probably most of you have seen. I am amazed at how many people have not seen it. This is a fabulous tool for teachers, and it really incorporates quite brilliantly many of the principles of how to interest the low income youngsters in a lively, meaningful way. It doesn't apply across the board. But it has a remarkable interesting way of involving the youngsters and making things into games. For example, it has an exercise where the youngsters call up about a job--have a conversation. Then the exercise is what the child did wrong that prevented him from getting the job. That's the type of class problem that they use. That's a fascinating little exercise. They try to guess and figure out what he did wrong.

One way to teach a great deal of the test-taking skills and know-how, which is so lacking in low income youngsters, is the use of game techniques--making the whole test operation into a game. Of course, Davis understood this years ago. I am not suggesting the Eells-Davis game test solved all problems. It obviously does not. But the concept of making the exercise into a game as a mode of teaching is a very significant one.

We have talked about the use of role playing. Now we come to the use of hip lessons. We have a member of the audience here who developed the use of the hip lesson at Syracuse--another Syracuse breakthrough. Very simply they used a poem by a Negro author, Langston Hughes. "I play it cool and dig all jive, that's the reason I stay alive. My motto, as I live and learn, to dig and be dug in return."

The poem was presented to the class by Weinstein, Curriculum Coordinator of the Madison Area Project. A teacher had complained that her students practically fell asleep when she read a poem called the Magic Carpet from the standard school anthology. You would too. Weinstein came to the rescue with Hughes' motto and distributed copies to the class. After the students heard the poem, there was a long moment of silence, then came various exclamations, "Say, this is tough. Hey, Mr. Weinstein, this cat is pretty cool. It's written in our talk." But when asked the meaning of playing it cool the students had difficulty verbalizing the idea. If we had stopped there, we would stop with the standard stereotype of our time, that these youngsters are inarticulate and non-verbal. Instead, they decided to role play the situation to see if the youngsters could be made more articulate.

A boy volunteered to act out a situation, and Weinstein was assigned the part of the teacher. The boy pretended he was walking down a hallway. "Hey you," said the teacher, "you are on the wrong side of the hall. Get over where you belong." Without looking up the boy very calmly and slowly walked to the other side and continued without any indication of what was going on in his mind. That was "playing it cool". When Weinstein asked the boy to show what he would do in not playing it cool, a verbal battle ensued. They now were able to talk since they had seen something physical, seen something in action. The verbalization changes under these circumstances.

The class began offering definitions for playing it cool. Someone said, "Calm and collected, no strain." Weinstein suggested another, nonchalant--a new word. I won't detail the rest of this, but the principle follows throughout. The use of the language of the youngsters was, in this case, a transitional mechanism for heightening their interest in literature.

I used hip materials in the same way in tutoring. We developed a long "hip-tionary"--a list of hip words such as, "bug"--and we put fancy definitions on the other side, "to disturb, bother, annoy, cop out"--to avoid conflict by running away, not considered admirable or honorably accepted." We used all the fancy words we could on the right side. "Cool it"--to be tranquil, peaceful, quiet. "Far out--not comprehendible, weak, inadequate, inappropriate," and so on. We found using words in this way not only livened the entire discussion, but facilitated the learning of the words on the right side of the list. The standard English words we were trying to encourage were much easier because of their interest and knowledge of the words on the left side, and because they also knew certain English words that stood for these hip words on the other side.

We also were able to use this material--this "hiptionary"--for developing a concept of metaphor, simile, antonyms, synonyms, and so on. I remember one of the youngsters came to lesson one day and had a great deal of difficulty understanding a metaphor. The teacher found it very difficult to explain. We looked at all this, and sure enough, the first word on the list, this is literally true on the "hiptionary", was "AC-DC" which stands for bisexual, and down a little further on the list is "switch-hitter" and swings from both sides of the fence. These particular metaphors she understood very well and the whole concept was developed clearly from it.

One closing comment. The field of education in the United States today is under constant criticism--the system, the teachers, and the administration. The conformity of the system, the lack of real learning and so on, are repeatedly attacked. Paul Goodman, the actual hero of this group, Edgar Friedenberg and many others have plenty of criticism of schools and teachers. In a similar vein, there is a constant powerful criticism of the middle-class in our country. I call this the Eric Fromm motif, because it is from my generation. It has more recently been taken over by Paul Goodman. This is the penetrating, deep, critical evaluation of our society, and middle-class people in particular, which leaves no one to do anything, as long as conformists have lost their spontaneity, their inner convictions and so on. I call this the court jester position. Everbody reads it, no one acts on it.. This criticism is very widespread, but there is one place where it hardly ever arises, and this is when we talk about teaching the disadvantaged children. The disadvantaged children apparently are to be made into these middle-class people by the school culture. They are to be made to adapt to the oft-criticized school. Suddenly, when we talk about these youngsters, we have a much more idealized picture of the school and middle-class life for which we are preparing these youngsters. Suddenly, these children are to be made to adjust, to conform to our wonderful way, and to forget how critical we have been.

I agree with David Riessman, Paul Goodman, and Eric Fromm and many other school critics that a great deal has to be done to change the middle-class and the schools. I sincerely believe that these disadvantaged youngsters with their culture and their style and their positives can contribute an enormous amount toward helping to change the middle-class, the school system, and the society. Thank you.

(Applause.)

DR. EASLEY: We will have time for a few questions. We would like to ask those who wish to address questions to Dr. Riessman to please stand and give your name. If we use a standard procedure here, it will simplify the recording operation.

MR. DAVID BUSHNELL: You mentioned programmed instruction as being helpful in allowing the student to work at his own pace, to work with some reinforcement at various stages of his development. I, too, feel that is a very sterile and not very feelingly written approach--at least the examples in existence today. Would you like to comment on that?

DR. RIESSMAN: I am very glad you mentioned that because I didn't have a chance to have it on my list. I didn't get to it at all. I completely agree with you. Programmed instruction, as it has been developed, has been quite inadequate for

low-income youngsters. Let me just tell you very briefly some reactions I got about it. I originally wrote that I thought programmed instruction would be good for these youngsters because, as you say, it could be attuned to their tastes, because of the machine-like dimensions, and so on, that they might be interested in. I went around the country and found different groups who were using the programmed learning in the teaching machines, and the youngsters were initially quite attracted to, and interested in them. And then they said to me, "Oh, Doc, it's just another reader, just another reader, just another reader." There is an interesting clue in this, because practically all the program materials that were developed, were developed using the reading media, using the reading format.

Now Donald Cook and others have recently begun to think about developing programmed instruction with records, in which you have the youngster do something, rather than read something. The record tells them to act out that situation, move that lever, try that demonstration, do this science experiment, observe this and so on, instead of "read" always. In other words, the key to a potential media and forms more attuned to the style and interests of the low income youngsters. I don't mean forever, because ultimately, of course, they are going to learn how to read. You are not going to simply capitulate to the style. You are going to use the style to get them to learn how to read. My style is not a reading style, but I use other means to encourage me to read, to develop reading and writing. The same thing would apply with these low income youngsters. I think we have to develop programmed materials in different style.

But one quick comment on the situation of programmed instruction that Donald Cook points out which I think is rather fascinating, and that is the observation which we know but we have forgotten. Cook points out that the difference between the so-called high I.Q. child and the low I.Q. child in many of these areas is simply a time difference. But if you program materials to the pace of the low I.Q. child and give him more time to learn it, he can learn and go on to very advanced material. But, rather, what has occurred in the system without this orientation, has been that when he is slow to learn it, we have assumed he can't learn it. We have stigmatized him and have done all kinds of things to make it impossible for him to learn it.

One of the significant things about the program, using the programmed learning, is that by developing the program appropriately and giving the person more time, he then can learn and go on to a higher level. I think that's what's good about program possibilities. But I want to very much say that I think programmed materials have to be put into visual, physical, and oral forms, rather than simply the reading format, before we can fully judge their possibilities.

MRS. HULDA GROBMAN: In our work we have been concerned with where and how one brings in the child's culture in the materials. It seems to me some of it becomes forced when you bring in the disadvantaged culture. Even the young child knows that some aspects of the culture are socially unacceptable. These are familiar. To bring them in, I consider insulting. Some of this has been suggested to us by people who say, this is something the child knows. Some, it seems to be to be condescending. Is there any guideline you would suggest? How do you offer it in this area?

DR. RIESSMAN: I think you are talking very much to the point that I tried to raise earlier. I think that what you are calling culture is not positive culture at all, but either negative cultural elements that do exist, or environmental features. For example, the business of bringing in - somebody told me - a slum housing situation, or a broken down neighborhood. This is no key element to bring in at all. But if you bring in, for example, the Scope material, they have a remarkable way of bringing in kinds of experiences, kinds of games, the kinds of materials the youngsters use in amusing themselves. The business of playing, for example, with the bottle tops. The spinning the bottle top and the other box top. The cartwheel is a good example.

You might think these are prosaic. But it isn't prosaic. These are things which the youngsters do and you can use the bottle tops and the marbles as an excellent exercise in the development of arithmetical concepts.

Clair Schmais in Washington has developed a fascinating program using dance materials, and dance forms, using some of the dances that the kids know about and other dances that they don't know about but using the dance style, the interest in the dance form. And she uses it to teach arithmetical concepts, geographical concepts, verbal concepts and so on. Now, here is someone with some imagination. But I think it is excellent that there is criticism of the people who, in a sterile, unknowing way, have agreed that the culture be brought into the classroom. They don't know anything about the culture or anything about the vitality of the life of the child, any positives in it, and bring in some very superficial or negative environmental characteristics--such as the fact there isn't enough heat in the house, or there isn't a father in the home. I don't think these are significant features to bring into the story. If I had nothing else to bring in I might consider it, but it seems to me we've got to take a look and find other things. Look at the street games. Take a look at the film by Lerner, a little ten minute film which is simply shot at random, filmed around low income neighborhoods, showing the games of the youngsters as a kind of material. Or look at what Robbins does when he plays the game in the class, that I described, in which he makes everybody answer the question, "What's five and six" and even if he gets the right answer, he turns his head like this and says, "Did you change your mind because the majority says five and six are twelve?" forcing everybody to answer, and using a number of little game-like techniques.

What I am suggesting here is to not simply look superficially at some environmental feature and incorporate that in the reading. This is what seems to me to have happened so far. I agree with your concern about it.

DR. EDMUND W. GORDON: In that last question, I think some of the negatives that get drawn in are referring to positive persons. I suspect many of these youngsters may be repelled by some of the negatives of their environment and the teacher can project the situation in which she is the youngsters' ally. In an attack on these negatives one might use the negative then as a motivating force in the learning situation. I think, when you were mentioning one of the aspects of the Black Muslim movement, that this is one of the things they have done rather successfully in building motivation, aspiration, and constructive effort around negative environment.

DR. REISSMAN: I think you are completely right, because what the Muslim and Nationalist movements have done is to criticize very strongly some things in the environment, but in the context of pride and emphasizing positives and saying in

a sense the thing I have tried to indicate. We don't enslave anybody. We don't discriminate against anybody. We don't use people and therefore we are better men.

Now you may think this is, you know, extreme formulation, in this dimension of building the pride, but let me remind you again of the little pamphlet, "Negro Heritage" which you can obtain. It comes out every other week, and used in all kinds of curriculum examples, which are very useful I think.

MR. SAM BURN: I have been trying to formulate the question and I have had a little difficulty, but I wonder if you would comment on your ideas about pre-school curricula. We have a great number of them. We might have the Montessori on the one hand and somebody might want something from; somebody feels that you ought to create an environment of the sand boy here, the dog here, let them respond to the teachers, elevate their play levels. There are all kinds of ideas about how to run a pre-school. Has there evolved some prominent model of some sort on which instruction can develop?

DR. REISSMAN: I think not. I think this is the time.

DR. SAM BURN: Many things that are presented are collected a little bit here, a little bit here, and a little bit here. We don't have a picture of how the children are developing, do we?

DR. REISSMAN: Well, I am not going to be able, in a sense, to answer what you are asking. I think it is a time for a great deal of experimentation in these areas. I am enormously impressed by Burton Black's experiment in Boston in which they use O.K. Moore's teaching machine technology. In a very short period of time they took the most highly deprived, disadvantaged youngsters and used Moore's techniques with them for a half hour per day, and they got fantastic improvement in their cognitive performance. The reason I mention this is because Dirk's material is better known, and I probably don't need to mention it. Also, Bank Street's progressive education orientation is better known, and Montessori is becoming very well known. Black's material was carried a step further. I can't be sure of the details of this, but Moore told me that when he was at Rutgers they were developing mobile trucks and going into the low income neighborhoods with O.K. Moore's technology and giving the youngsters potentially on a large scale a little bit of this material.

I think this is worth exploring to see how long it lasts; which material develops what kinds of effects. We really don't know this kind of thing.

Strodtbeck, for example, got rapid six week improvement in the I.Q. up to thirteen points, measured I.Q. of children of ADC mothers. He didn't get it of all of them but he got a number of them, and he tried to analyze out which ones, and what the reasons were, and so on. So I am saying that in this area we need a great deal more information as to what kind of techniques to use.

I would recommend in the programming going on throughout the country, that we start to hire a large number of people from the poor, non-professionals, males in particular, to work in these classrooms as assistants. I think just being there will produce some very different results in the class in terms of their responsiveness to the boy and their connection to the boy. I would think this is an extremely important type of operation.

I think the Montessori material, which, as you know, began with so-called slum children, is worth a careful look; because in terms of its ratio, it can reach large numbers of youngsters, thirty-five to one ratio which the Montessori people expect.

So I hope you understand that when I was critical of the strategy before, I wasn't critical of the fact or the practice of educating pre-school children, I simply don't want it to be seen as a major way of overcoming the difficulties of the disadvantaged. I don't think it is. I think it is one small prong in a much larger attack which has to go after the school system itself--the administrators, the teachers, the curriculum materials and the hiring of non-professionals. I would put all of those things on a much higher priority than the pre-school thing, but just the reverse is taking place.

DR. EASLEY: I am afraid it is my very painful duty to draw this interesting discussion to a close. I am very much aware of the interesting events to come and particularly of the fact that there is now coffee available in the back of the auditorium. I hope that some of you will be able to get together with Professor Riessman with the questions that you didn't get a chance to ask here publicly.